committed irregularities in the utilisation of JRY funds. Every possible efforts are being taken by the Government of India to avoid the misuse of JRY funds.

Rehabilitation of people affected by floods in Tehri Hydro Project Area

521. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have directed the U.P. Government and the Tehri Hydro-Power Development Corporation recently that the people likely to be affected by floods during rainy season in the Tehri project area are only to be evacuated and not permanently rehabilitated somewhere;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by Government to rehabilitate them after the monsoon season; and

(c) the total number of people affected by this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation have been advised to stay the shifting of the population from the project area. However, people threatened by floods during the monsoon can be evacuated, and could return to their homes after the floods are over.

(c) 4909 rural families and 5291 urban families are required to be relocated at alternate sites as a result of the construction of the Tehri Project-Stage-I. Another 3998 rural families would only be partially affected and would not be required to be displaced.

Abandoning of oil search in the Bengal basin

522. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC has abondoned/propose to abondon oil search in the Bengal Basin;

(b) if so, when the exploration for oil search was started in the Bengal Basin;

(c) the estimated expenditure incurred so far on the project; and

(d) the reasons for abondoning the work after incurring huge expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Exploration for hydrocarbons in West Bengal was initiated in 1949 by Standard Vacuum Oil Company of USA. Subsequently, this was followed by Indo-Stanvac Petroleum (ISPP). ONGC started exploration in this basin in 1962 and is persuing it, ever since.

(c) Besides the expenditure incurred by other oil companies, the ONGC has incurred an expenditure of Rs. 644.96 crores in Bengal Basin till 31.3.1996.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Aging Nuclear Installations in the Country

523. SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item entitled "Atomic Board Chief Blasts DAE" published in "The Pinoeer" dated the June 17, 1996;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that many of the country's nuclear installations have aged and have serious problems characteristic of the early vintage design; and

(c) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) the oldest power station in India, commenced commercial operation in October, 1969 and has completed over 26 years of successful operation. Of the two units of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) the first one commenced commercial operation in December 1973 and the second one in April 1981. The two units of the Madras Atomic Power Station commenced commercial operation in January 1984 and March 1986 respectively.

Upgradation of the safety systems of nuclear installations due to ageing of the plants and version of standards of safety is a continuous process being undertaken by the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). A number of steps for upgrading safety systems have been taken up. TAPS-II Core shroud inspection has been carried out and found to be in acordance with safety requirements. Feed water spray nozzle in the Reactors at TAPS I & II have been inspected and found to be in good conditions. Aged pipes in the Primary Heat Transport System of the Tarapur Plant have been replaced. Enmasse Coolant Channel replacement and upgradation of Emergency Core Cooling System in RAPS-II have been taken up and are in progress. Other areas of safety upgradation have been identified and NPCIL and AERB are jointly preparing and implementing appropriate corrective action within a committee time-frame.

Visit of Foreign Ambassadors to J & K

524. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJI RAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a team of European and other ambassadors visited Doda and other militancy affected areas of J & K, to study the situation following mass killings in the post Lok Sabha elections period;

(b) if so, what is Government's assessment of the post-election scenario in J & K and how it compares with the assessment of those foreign dignitaries; and

(c) whether there was a mass exodus from the militancy affected areas; if so, to what extent and whether the displaced persons have since returned to their houses, indicating the steps taken to restore normalcy there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMANIYAN): (a) Yes, Sir. A team of Ambassadors of the European Union visited Jammu & Kashmir between 12 to 15 June, 1996. During the visit they had discussions with State Government officials and representatives of various parties and groups in the state. The ambassadors did not visit Doda nor was the visit related to any specific incidents of mass killings, etc.

(b) As no reports are given to the Government by such dignitaries on visits of this nature, the question of any comparative assessment does not arise. However, in the opinion of the Government, although the level of violence still remains high, there is a distinct and perceptible improvement in the overall security environment in the State.

(c) No, Sir. Does not arise.